

“Here We Go Again”: Race and Redevelopment in Downtown Richmond, Virginia, 1977-Present

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Abstract

This article examines newspapers, archival collections, interviews, and personal papers to place Richmond, Virginia, at the center of the national debate about public–private revitalization projects. Since World War II, America’s urban leaders, led by interracial coalitions of black politicians and white business elites, have used racial capitalism to promise that tax-funded redevelopment projects would enrich their cities, provide better public services, and reconcile the legacy of racist urban planning. Richmond’s issues with Project One and the Sixth Street Marketplace in the 1980s, as well as recent issues with the Navy Hill Project, reveals the continuum of political and economic peril that comes with using such plans. Because urban revitalization is supremely profit-driven and shaped by the economic thinking that created disparate levels of white corporate wealth and black urban poverty, it is bound to exacerbate systemic racism.

Keywords

race, revitalization, redevelopment, Richmond, Project One, Sixth Street Marketplace

Richmond is more than the former capital of the Confederacy: it is a city seeking to end its complicity with American racism. The spirit of reconciliation has compelled residents and leadership to form nationally recognized interracial civic groups, celebrate its Civil Rights heroes, and answer the call to remove historical monuments dedicated to the defense of slavery and Jim Crow.¹ Yet, nothing encapsulates Richmond’s urge for racial modernity, and more so its troublesome identity, better than the complicated history of urban redevelopment/revitalization.² Like other cities around the country, Richmond is currently entrenched in a debate over a highly controversial redevelopment plan that commodifies its troubled history with racism.³ Richmond’s Navy Hill Project, in particular, involves progressive black political and white economic leaders who wish to use tax-subsidies to construct mixed-use downtown facilities in a former black neighborhood that was destroyed by urban renewal. They argue that the new development will help reconcile the evils of urban renewal by bridging the gulf between the growing economy (stemming largely from a prior decade of gentrification) and the struggling public programs which disproportionately serves black people. This article examines newspapers, archival collections, interviews, and personal papers to place two 1980s projects at the center of the current

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debate about Navy Hill. By doing so, it argues that the Navy Hill Project, like similar efforts around the nation, is informed by decades-old paternalistic logic where elites of both races use race relations as a ploy to convert tax revenue—and in some cases debt—into new corporate infrastructure for profit. Furthermore, this article uses Richmond to further the argument that redevelopment projects perpetuate the systemic divide between white wealth and black poverty that has defined inner cities since World War II.

This article fits within two streams of an accomplished literature about the nature and function of local governments between World War II and the early 2000s, a time defined by the Modern Civil Rights Movement, suburban flight, and the political and social de-centering of American urban life. Some of the earliest scholarship on the subject, such as *The Unheavenly City Revisited* (1974) and *City Limits* (1981), argues that modern American cities operated primarily as class-centered seats of technological innovation and economic growth that ignored racial issues within policy making.⁴ This article sides with monographs such as *Downtown, Inc.* (1989), *Between Justice and Beauty* (1995), *Redevelopment and Race* (1997), *Camden After the Fall* (2009), *Civitas by Design* (2010), and *Bootstrap New Urbanism* (2014) in arguing that cities were racialized entities where the increase in black participatory politics—both voting and officeholding—since the 1960s ensured that economics could not always be the driving factor of policy making. This article separates, however, from the prevailing literature's stance that urban revitalization was a positive, but flawed, response to suburban flight and urban decay in the 1980s.⁵ Using a Southern lens to examine a topic mostly associated with Northern and Midwestern cities, this article aligns with seminal works such as *Making the Second Ghetto* (1983) and *Origins of the Urban Crisis* (1996) in seeing urban revitalization plans as reinforcers of the racial division and inequality they were supposed to combat.⁶

The second historiographic stream discusses the use of racial capitalism by the interracial coalitions formed between black politicians and white business elites. Economic flight to the suburbs compelled interracial coalitions to commodify their cities' racial tolerance as inclusive identities that could be sold to business interests, suburbanites, and residents for profit.⁷ *Regime Politics* (1989) and *Charleston in Black and White* (2015) argue that interracial coalitions, or as they are called in *Regime Politics*, "urban regimes," were "effective" in their use of racial capitalism because they "excel[ed] in getting strategically positioned people to act together" in the uncomfortable demise of Jim Crow.⁸ *Why Don't American Cities Burn?* (2012), *A World More Concrete* (2014), *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation* (2016), and *Legend of the Black Mecca* (2017) take the opposing position that interracial coalitions and racial capitalism functioned as corrupt bargains that stymied the social unrest of the 1960s at the expense of diverting resources from city coffers to private interests. Some, such as *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, go even further in suggesting that interracial coalitions and racial capitalism were offensive mechanisms "designed to exploit and oppress" the black poor.⁹ Driving home their point is the reality that in spite of the increased prosperity and stability of the urban black middle class between the 1970s and early 2000s, cities have yet to drag its low-income minority residents out of abject poverty. To the latter half of scholars, this failure is not as much by accident as it was by design.

Resting in the slim middle ground between these divergent trends in urban scholarship, this article uses Richmond to make a larger claim that interracial coalitions, and the racial capitalism they generate, create more racial animus and distrust by ensuring the failure of redistributive urban development plans. Yet, interracial coalitions should not be viewed as the mere vehicle for black leaders to generate power, white leaders to retain power, and capitalists to siphon money from desperate cities looking to chase ghosts and recapture their economic glory. The Richmond story shows that interracial coalitions are like the cities they control: they are contested terrains where economic policies are shaped by misguided people with flawed rationale, such as the axiom that economic prosperity requires public investment into corporate



Figure 1. Image of Henry L. Marsh, III, being sworn into the Richmond City Council, courtesy of the Valentine Museum. Photo: Al Cothran Studio.

profitability, and that social harmony will become the inevitable result of the often one-sided public-private partnerships.

“Build People and Not Things”

Since English merchant William Byrd I acquired the rural hinterland that became Richmond in the seventeenth century, changes to the landscape reflected the oppression of black people. Centuries of black slavery turned the dense forest once inhabited by Monacan and Powhatan tribes into the tobacco and iron hub of the Antebellum South. After Union troops burned Richmond to the ground on April 3, 1865, industrial elites replaced the slavocracy and rebuilt their city by accepting the promise of the New South. Disenfranchised and segregated black labor built Richmond’s newer railroads, factories, municipal buildings, and upscale neighborhoods.¹⁰ White city leaders even hired black hands to erect Confederate monuments, reminding them that while slavery was gone, their inferior classification would remain.¹¹ While the reality of inequality betrayed freedom’s promise, blacks created a separate city within Richmond that housed some of the most vibrant black business, religious, and fraternal communities in America.¹² Still, Richmond remained the physical representation of black suppression, an issue best explained by a longtime Southern historian: “The whole maze of restrictions and limitations revolves itself to a simple formula: the Negro has a place, and *he must stay in it.*”¹³

The World War II era generated irreversible changes to the Richmond area. Whereas the city long languished as an oversized sleepy Southern town of around 180,000 people, the influx of war industries helped Richmond grow to around 250,000 at its height in 1970, a mark that the city has yet to reach again. The Richmond area, however, grew to around half a million, with most of that growth happening in the suburbs of Henrico and Chesterfield Counties. The counties combined population of 80,000 in 1950 swelled to around 220,000 by 1970. This suburban growth came from the mass production of automobiles, post-World War II industrial growth, and white migration to larger, more affordable housing in the crabgrass frontier. These factors ensured that the once hyper-rural and overwhelmingly white suburban counties bled Richmond of its white



Figure 2. Image of Andrew Brent discussing Project One with the city council and press, courtesy of the Valentine Museum. Photo: Gary Burns.

middle class from the early 1950s until the early 2010s. At the same time, Richmond's black population more than doubled from 50,000 (130,000 white) just before World War II to 105,000 by 1970 (143,000 white).¹⁴

As whites fled to the suburbs, and blacks, who were looking for work and cheaper housing in the growing industrial sector, migrated toward the inner city, white Richmond officials acted in the "national interest to encourage and promote the development of transportation systems" through black inner-city neighborhoods.¹⁵ The long-term goal was to infrastructurally connect the inner city to the growing suburbs with the hopes of forming a city-county merger, something that Southern white leaders in Nashville, Jacksonville, Miami, and Baton Rouge accomplished, while whites in Richmond failed to do.¹⁶ Blacks represented more than 97 percent of Richmond's displaced families during the urban renewal movements of the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁷ Even worse, local white banks, landlords, and real estate firms refused them housing outside of designated neighborhoods.¹⁸ In the midst of these trying times, black Richmonders found a hero in local Civil Rights attorney Henry Levander Marsh, III. After winning one of the nine contested city council seats in 1966, he vowed to change the anti-black renewal agenda by promising to "build people and not things."¹⁹

Marsh's electoral victory resulted from larger shifts in both urban and Civil Rights history. Ironically born in December 1933 in a single-family home that would eventually be demolished to construct the Richmond Coliseum, the Howard Law School graduate helped bring the full brunt of the Modern Civil Rights Movement to Richmond.²⁰ Marsh aided several blacks in burdening the local, state, and federal court systems with desegregation cases, ranging from criminal trespassing—lunch counter sit-ins—to lawsuits that implemented the recently decided *Brown v. Board of Education* decision.²¹ Marsh admittedly grew tired of exclusively conducting his Civil Rights work as an attorney, so he capitalized on the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) by running for city council.²² Becoming a policy maker, Marsh felt, would help him better reengineer Richmond from a citadel of arch-conservatism to an organ of racial equity. He ran for office in the right city, as Richmond had a strong middle-class voting machine that had worked since the 1940s to convert their growing black populations into powerful voting blocs. It was not until after the passage of the VRA, however, that the voting and population demographics allowed blacks in Richmond and elsewhere to vote their own into public offices. Marsh's strong record on Civil Rights compelled black Richmonders to elect him to the city council in June 1966.²³



Figure 3. Image of the youthful Clarence Townes, courtesy of the Virginia Commonwealth University Special Collections.

Shortly after entering City Hall, Marsh froze more than \$95 million in local, state, and federal funding by mobilizing hundreds of black Richmonders against highway construction.²⁴ His advocacy included increasing the city spending on social services and public education, proving that “the downtrodden and exploited people of the poverty stricken areas of Richmond have a real champion” in Henry Marsh, a white political insider once said.²⁵ Marsh’s anti-urban renewal campaign cemented his place in Richmond’s mostly white and arch-conservative political power structure. This place was key as school desegregation accelerated white suburban flight in the early 1970s, compelling the majority white city council to illegally annex twenty-three square miles of the neighboring Chesterfield County suburb to maintain the fleeting white voting and population majority. A black man named Curtis Holt sued the city council over the 1970 annexation on the grounds that it violated Section V of the VRA, which required any land deals (annexations and consolidations) that altered minority voting power to be vetted and pre-approved by the U.S. Justice Department. After five years of litigation, the federal courts, at the behest of the Justice Department, ruled in his favor.²⁶

The federal courts allowed Richmond to keep the illegally annexed territory; however, they ordered the city council to change their local election format from at-large to ward-style voting. The acceleration of white suburban flight during the annexation case (1970-1975) ensured that, as Marsh told the *Richmond Afro-American* newspaper in 1976, “we could elect five blacks to the city council.”²⁷ Marsh’s optimism was met with the reality that after two decades of political maneuvering, white elites ended their attempts to maintain a majority white Richmond and political power structure. Rather, they decided to use their economic weight to influence future political decisions from outside of the city council chambers. This symbolic retreat resulted in white officials transferring the ranks of leadership to blacks in the form of political appointments to the school board, fire department, housing authority, and other citywide departments between 1975 and 1976. The 1977 local elections capped this era of racial transition, as five black candidates



Figure 4. Image of T. Justin Moore, courtesy of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce Collection, Valentine Museum.

ran and won controlling interest in the nine-member city council, giving Richmond its first black majority council in history.²⁸

By spring 1977, blacks were, for the first time ever, the city's population (around 220,000 people and 52% black) and voting majority while also holding controlling interest in city government. A local white minister said after blacks gained power in City Hall that "We live in a divided city. Two very different points of view. Two very different experiences. Two very different attitudes. And these differences split most deeply along racial lines."²⁹ Black leaders used their political power to hire more black city workers and increase public services to black areas. White leaders and their constituents adversely wanted to neuter the newly black city government by cutting public spending on everything but capital improvements. In response to black leaders' agenda, white leaders "perceive[d] blacks to be anti-business [and] anti-compromise . . . injecting [the] consciousness of race into everything," an internal memo stated.³⁰ As the Civil Rights Era succumbed to the age of Modern Conservatism, it was clear to all that Richmond remained a racially divided city. A bipartisan study about local race relations revealed that "What happens here [in City Hall] generally reflects tension throughout the city and, at the same time, contributes to the racial division of the city."³¹

"It Is People, Not Concrete and Steel that Makes a City Viable"

The late 1970s, otherwise known as "the era of a new relationship between the South and the rest of the nation" by the *Atlanta Constitution*, disrupted race relations in Richmond.³² This new relationship was built on the understanding that Southern cities, behind coalitions of black political leaders and white business elites, would allow Northern and Western firms to connect the

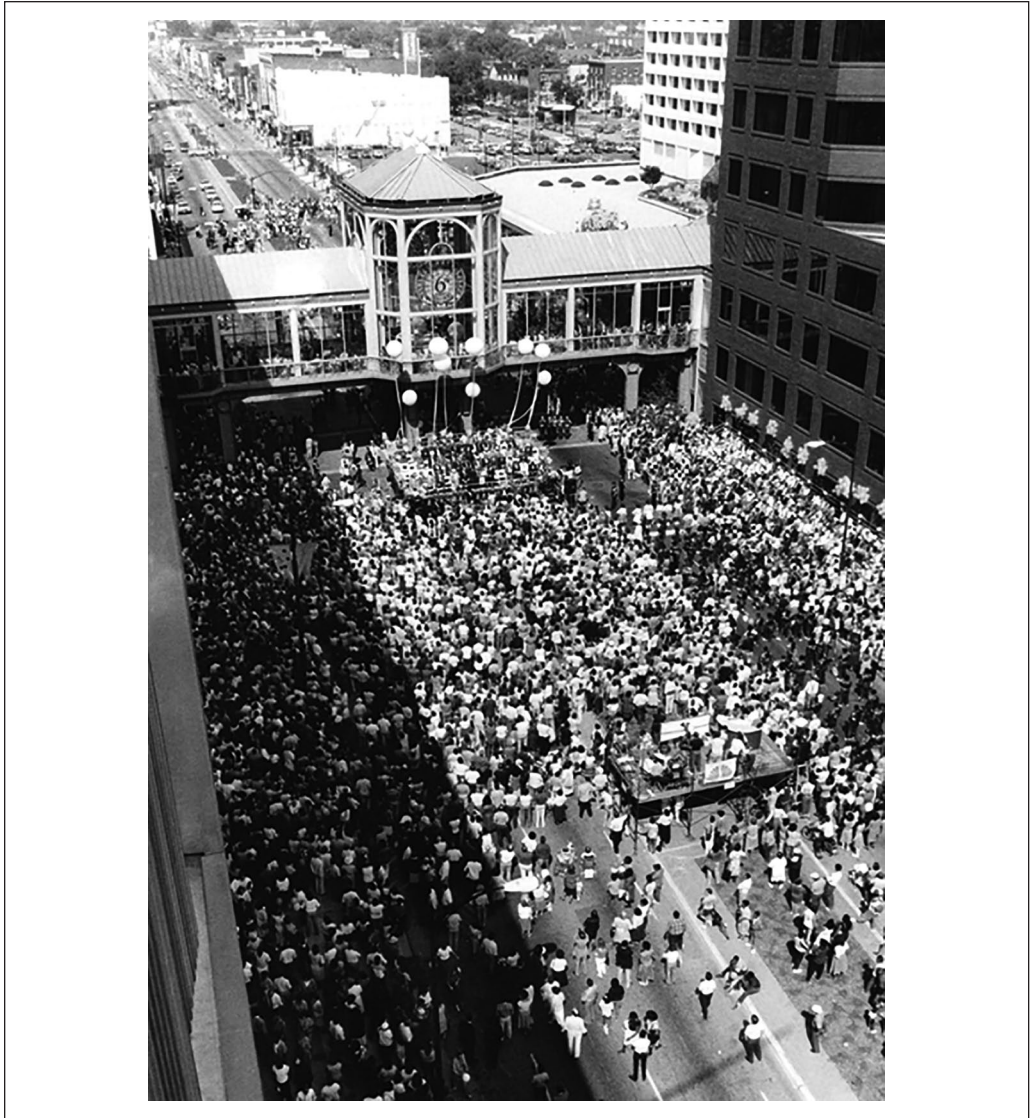


Figure 5. Image of the Sixth Street Marketplace grand opening, courtesy of Virginia Commonwealth University Special Collections. Photo: Lindy Keast Rodman.

long-struggling region to global trade markets. These efforts were successful as by the late 1970s, the South, for the first time in American history, exported more poor people than they imported, holding half of America's largest cities and a mostly metropolitan population.³³ While the region as a whole benefited from the corporate flight to the South, cities such as Atlanta, Memphis, Nashville, Charleston, Charlotte, and Birmingham competed heavily against one another to improve their own economic standing.³⁴ Richmond—the nation's leader in tobacco and synthetic fiber production—tried to grow with the region by attracting the likes of Figgie International, CSX Corporation, and ten other Fortune 500 companies to share space with Philip Morris (tobacco), James River Corporation (paper), Reynolds Metal (aluminum), and DuPont (chemical).



Figure 6. Image of the speech given by James Rouse at the Sixth Street Marketplace grand opening, courtesy of the Valentine Museum. Photo: Masaaki Okada.

The corporate flight to Richmond, like other Southern cities, came in large part from black political and white business elites engaging in racial capitalism: commodifying and selling their racial identities for social and economic gain. While Southern urban centers long existed as entities that limited the freedom of racial minorities, city fathers, during the Jim Crow era, recruited outside business interests and high-income residents by promoting the illusion that economic growth came from the interracial harmony created by segregation.³⁵ The best example of this is the region's flagship City of Atlanta, who, while being viciously segregated, long marketed itself as "The City too Busy to Hate." After the Modern Civil Rights Movement, however, Southern cities assumed the responsibility of changing the region's racist image by selling their acquiescence to desegregation as America's newly paved road to economic prosperity.³⁶ Under this guise, racial tolerance at the highest levels of urban government equaled racial harmony throughout the region. Black faces in high places ensured that social inequality did not result in riots, and white leaders held the purse strings to keep newly elected black politicians from enacting regulatory and redistributive policies that cut into corporate profit margins. Richmond was no stranger to this activity as the unusual site of black men and women walking into the newly built, glass-plated City Hall building along East Broad Street was, according to *Ebony Magazine*, "A sign of the changing times." They continued that "Out in Hollywood Cemetery, Confederate President Jefferson Davis must be turning over in his grave."³⁷

Less discussed among sharp critics of interracial coalitions, and their use of racial capitalism, was the collective desire among black and white leaders to make racial harmony more fact than fiction.³⁸ Just months after becoming Richmond's first black mayor, Marsh vowed to "bridging barriers between [black and white] people" with public-private revitalization projects.³⁹ In an interview about race relations in 1980s Richmond, a white minister and former black politician noted that Marsh was but one of the bevy of black leaders looking to mend their relationship with whites by creating plans for economic growth.⁴⁰ They were in luck because the white business community also wanted "to get to know and trust responsible individuals in the black community."⁴¹ Driven by the disdain of white flight, which cost the city more than 3,000 residents per year since 1975, white business leader Andrew J. Brent, Jr., wanted to use redevelopment—a tactic formerly used to reinforce white supremacy—as a mechanism for racial and economic healing. Brent descended from an upper-class family, practiced commerce law, chaired many local organizations, and started Downtown Development Unlimited (DDU): a nonprofit



Figure 7. Image of T. Justin Moore (right) riding with Richmond Mayor Roy A. West under the Bridge of Unity, courtesy of the Valentine Museum. Photo: Masaaki Okada.

organization designed to bring investments, businesses, and middle-class people back to Richmond.⁴² DDU partnered with the Richmond City Council and became one of many public-private coalitions across the country designed to spur economic development in decaying inner cities.⁴³ With a commitment to racial harmony from white leadership, Marsh touted that “our city can be and ought to be a model for the nation.”⁴⁴

The target of revitalization was downtown Richmond. For most of American history, downtowns were the centers of urban life. After World War II, they became business outposts for global markets and retail centers for white suburbia.⁴⁵ Downtown Richmond fit well within this mold as “there was a time when, not so long ago, if one were a member of the white collar community in Richmond, downtown was THE [*sic*] place to be.” Between the 1960s and 1970s, suburban flight reduced downtown’s economic contribution to Richmond from 25 to 10 percent.⁴⁶ Thus, Marsh and Brent agreed to revitalize the area with Project One: the construction of a new business building, convention center, and hotel complex along downtown’s main artery of East Broad Street. While there was no sophisticated redistributive system articulated at its inception, Project One was to be the beginning of several revitalization plans designed to generate enough rent and retail dollars to provide the overwhelmingly black working and underclass with sufficient public services.

Project One was a part of a national urban revitalization movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Unlike urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s, city leaders designed revitalization projects to repopulate cities with corporate chains and turn white suburban shoppers into potential urban residents. President Jimmy Carter dedicated billions in block grants to help bring the 250 projects into fruition; the largest recipients being Newark, New York City, Detroit, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and other non-Southern cities.⁴⁷ Richmond’s Project One was unique in that it did not receive any of the \$10 billion in federal subsidies spent on revitalization projects, nor did it receive any funding from the Virginia Legislature.⁴⁸ With the moratorium on annexations and consolidations which protected “urban” counties in 1971, the Virginia Legislature compelled its struggling majority black cities to look toward the federal government and corporate partnerships to improve their revenue.⁴⁹ In essence, the Virginia Legislature treated their majority black cities as businesses that were not worth meaningful investment. Richmond’s black and white leadership, still, took it upon themselves to make Project One a reality. It was a lower-budget operation (\$35 million), meagerly funded by local corporations and taxpayers. By December 1977, Brent

secured almost \$100,000 in initial investments, found a developer (Gerald D. Hines from Houston, Texas) with a core hotel chain (Hilton Corporation), and worked with Marsh and the city council to bond Richmond's \$32.2 million debt and sell it to shareholders.⁵⁰

This show of interracial solidarity from city leaders was not met with tremendous support by residents at-large. Black Richmonders clamored for better city services and the political success of their newly elected city councilmembers. However, they did not believe that shoveling thinly stretched tax dollars to white developers satisfied those desires.⁵¹ While few black organizations vocally opposed Project One, grassroots resistance came mostly from the Richmond Independent Taxpayer Association (RITA). This marginal group was "born out of opposition to the downtown office, convention center and hotel development," said the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.⁵² While the mostly white middle-class property/business owners, who "have felt cut out of power for decades by the white Establishment," organized in 1975, it was not until 1978 that they petitioned the local and state courts to end Project One.⁵³ The litigious RITA even met with Marsh and Brent to convince them that, "It is people not concrete and steel that makes a city viable."⁵⁴ RITA was not unique in that other grassroots organizations rose in opposition to revitalization in Northern and Midwestern cities such as Boston, Philadelphia, Providence, New York City, Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Newark, and Cleveland.⁵⁵ Southern city leaders in Charleston, Atlanta, and D.C. also battled with taxpayers on using public funds to build new mixed-use facilities.⁵⁶

City leaders saw development projects as an inherent societal good that would beautify the landscape, strengthen the economy, and attract newer middle-class (white) residents.⁵⁷ RITA, and other groups like them around the nation, saw these projects as wasteful because spending on infrastructure, welfare, and capital improvements, they believed, would accomplish the same task with less long-term financial risk.⁵⁸ RITA's issues with Project One mirrored current residents' issues with Navy Hill. Both the older and newer Richmonders believed that the divide between corporate wealth and improvements to city life rested with a public investment into the places people fled, such as decaying neighborhoods and failing schools. Newer convention centers and hotels could not hide that fact, and the national press agreed. While "cities of all sizes are turning hopefully to convention centers to bring in the tourists and jingle the cash registers," said the *Washington Post*, "there is very little data current enough to say that an urban revival is taking place," the like-minded *Businessweek Magazine* concluded.⁵⁹

Interracial coalitions were very susceptible to fracture, especially when confronted with unexpected gridlock. RITA's opposition compelled Gerald D. Hines and the Hilton Hotel Corporation "to withdraw from participation in [the] project" on Friday, November 10, 1978, about one year after the plan was announced. They generously allowed Brent to control the public narrative by refusing to speak with the press regarding their withdrawal. While Brent informed the press that he dropped Hines and Hilton from Project One because of a disagreement over the lease agreements, it was widely known that "the withdrawal was prompted because of the delay of more than a year resulting from the litigation instituted by the Richmond Independent Taxpayer Association." With the developer and hotel chain gone, and the city bonds unsold due to pending litigation, "it seems to me that the Project is now in real jeopardy," Brent wrote to Marsh.⁶⁰ The mayor never responded to Brent's letter. He instead told reporters that Project One was "strong enough to stand on its own" without a developer or hotel partnership. Fearing that these kinds of comments would scare off other partners, Brent told the mayor that, "If this is to be the method of operating, then we [DDU] do not want to be a partner or held responsible for the decisions in which we do not participate."⁶¹

"A Dividing Line Separating Whites and Blacks"

When Hines and Hilton backed out of Project One, Richmond leaders had to watch other competing cities land hotel deals. In the summer of 1981, Hilton announced the opening of their new

\$70 million, 825-room grand hotel equipped with restaurants, spas, luxury penthouses, and conference rooms. Months before, the rival Marriott Company announced the grand opening of two 2,000-room luxury hotels with similar accommodations.⁶² Neither ribbon cutting ceremony happened in Richmond, a 52 percent black city with 220,000 residents.⁶³ Both ceremonies reflected, however, the hotel landgrab that the city was endanger of missing out on, and the pheromone of optimism for downtown revitalization that local leadership was so desperately attracted to.⁶⁴ In the early 1980s, cities across the nation had black politicians, white business elites, and developers align to construct mid-size multi-use arenas to infiltrate the growing conference and convention tourism market. Southern-born hotel chains such as Hilton (Texas) and Marriott (Virginia) expanded at this time by agreeing to anchor these revitalization projects.⁶⁵ They, like hotels would years later, exploited the opportunities created by urban leaders by negotiating for generous public subsidies, placing the bills of their expansion at the foot of taxpayers.⁶⁶ Then and now, large, glass-plated downtown hotels were visible signs of economic progress that city leaders desperately desired to represent and facilitate their revitalization projects. Thus, this section will show that the need among Richmond black and white leaders to attract and locate a core hotel unveiled the racial and political tensions that ultimately ruined Project One and the illusion of racial progress it stood for.

RITA's legal opposition to Project One ended in January 1980, when the Virginia Supreme Court refused to hear their cases any further. Although city leaders successfully alienated the dissent lying beneath them, they learned that conquering it among themselves remained the hardest task. After the city council sold its bonded debt and began constructing Project One, Marsh and Brent courted Marriott in hopes that they would become the project's core hotel.⁶⁷ The fastest growing hotel chain in the world was interested in adding Richmond to its empire, but they were not "interested in Project One."⁶⁸ Brent wanted to entertain other offers to lure Marriott into a favorable deal; Marsh, on the contrary, did not. Feeling that the reputation of their interracial coalition, and more so black leadership, depended on Project One's success, Marsh brokered a fifty-year lease agreement with Marriott for a 400-room hotel with an 89,000 person capacity convention center, an 80,000 square-foot hall, and the promise to allocate up to \$9 million in tax revenue to cover Marriott's debt if they could not turn a profit after nine years in operation.⁶⁹ Brent was disappointed with Marsh as he once again excluded white leadership from a project designed to bring the races together. When the news broke, Brent had little to say, stating that "I think Henry Marsh is an ambitious rascal."⁷⁰

The lingering issues with race and geography reflected that interracial coalitions were not always held together by a collective desire for power. In fact, black and white leadership, while uniting for the cause of racial harmony, splintered on exactly what that reality should look like. Marsh and the black city councilmembers (five of them in total) wanted the core hotel located north of Broad Street—"a euphemism for that side of the central city that is predominantly black," said the *New York Times*.⁷¹ Conversely, the four white city councilmen wanted the hotel south of Broad Street because, in the words of a local political scientist, "No respectable white person would dare sleep north of Broad Street."⁷² Even out-of-towners knew that "when North was north and South was south, Broad Street divided the black and white sections of Richmond. And there are still some blonde-haired ladies in tennis shoes who won't walk on the northside of Broad."⁷³ North of Broad Street were the city's well-known black enclaves such as Jackson Ward, Navy Hill, Battery Park, and Barton Heights. South of Broad were the pillars of white Richmond power—St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Capitol Square, The Jefferson Hotel, Thalheimer's Department Store, Miller and Rhodes, The First Bank of Virginia, and other key brokerage and law firms.⁷⁴ Broad Street displayed that almost a decade after the Modern Civil Rights Movement, racial segregation was alive and well in Richmond. Thus, city leaders' efforts to minimize this fact while recruiting outside businesses, like Project One itself, succumbed to debates about the core hotel's location.

The hotel controversy revealed that in spite of the racial capitalist propaganda and planning, race relations had not significantly improved since Marsh's inauguration on May 8, 1977. After being sworn in, Marsh and his fellow black councilmembers broke with tradition by hiring full-time assistants and occupying offices in City Hall.⁷⁵ The racial divide on the council widened when Marsh and his four black colleagues voted to fire City Manager William J. Leidinger, the white hold over from a previous administration. A year after Leidinger's dismissal, the white and black councilmembers disagreed over black councilmembers redrawing the voting districts to increase their majority on the city council. White councilmembers conducted secret investigations with the hopes of ousting their black colleagues from office. While their efforts failed to unseat a single black councilmember, they helped further the racial divide at one of the most critical times in city history.⁷⁶

The hotel controversy made Project One a part of the city's racialized political turmoil. Marsh's stance confirmed to white leaders what they long felt to be true: "The black majority on the city council is incompetent, and that the mayor is arrogant."⁷⁷ White councilmembers froze the city budget, halted Project One construction, and threatened to remove their businesses from downtown.⁷⁸ "The white majority wanted Project one to fail as long as Henry L. Marsh 3d was Mayor," a black councilmember once said.⁷⁹ Others were more pessimistic, feeling that "There are some people who'd rather see this city run into the ground than under black leadership."⁸⁰ In the midst of this disagreement, the Hilton Corporation re-entered the fray by purchasing a plot of land directly across the street from the Marriott site. There was widespread speculation that white leaders facilitated the purchase to ruin Project One; however, there is little documentary evidence to support it.

Marsh reached out to the Hilton developer with the hopes of convincing them to build elsewhere.⁸¹ They responded by inviting Marsh to the hotel's public announcement. Marsh did not attend "for reasons which I am sure you will understand," he wrote to Hilton.⁸² With Project One's centerpiece compromised, Marsh and the black members of city council passed Resolution 81-R132-125, forcing Hilton to pay the city for operating near the Project One site.⁸³ Hilton sued the city soon after. The mounting cost of appeals forced the city council to settle out of court and foot \$5 million in restitution.⁸⁴ As Richmond erected Project One alongside of the Hilton hotel, the *New York Times* optimistically saw it as "a new attempt at cooperation between blacks and whites in a city with a history of racial acrimony and nearly consistent interracial bickering on its city council."⁸⁵ Yet, Richmond leaders learned that converting urban revitalization—a longtime tool of division—into a mechanism of unity would not be easy given that two separate hotels emerged from the desire to build only one.⁸⁶

A Bridge of Unity

The reconciliatory promise, and ultimate political demise, of Project One did not end interracial coalitions, or the use of racial capitalism in post-Civil Rights Richmond. In fact, it generated discussions between black and white leaders about ways to prevent future revitalization plans from going awry. These discussions began with elite black and white women in the basement of churches, ballrooms of country clubs, and living rooms of lavish Far West End homes. These wives came to a consensus that the issues with urban revitalization evolved from a sociopolitical divide where "the movers and shakers, the people with power, tend to isolate themselves with their own kind."⁸⁷ While elite white and black women worked together within civic organizations and charity groups, their husbands, and the city at-large, maintained de facto racial segregation in neighborhoods, churches and schools, leaving "few opportunities for forming friendships between blacks and whites."⁸⁸ This segregation was detrimental to Richmond leadership in particular because, as a white minister lamented, the seeking of "sameness through private clubs and private schools" gridlocked city politics in ways it did not

elsewhere. Before blacks gained a majority in City Hall, white elites made major decisions around tee time, over dinner, at lunch, in backyard barbeques, and at sporting events where blacks were not in attendance.⁸⁹ This practice became a liability when blacks gained controlling interest in city government. Still, both races maintained *de facto* segregation between themselves after March 1977, hardening the ideological and political divisions that led to Project One's demise.

In the twilight of Project One negotiations, a few well-to-do white and black women organized secret "gatherings of members of the black and white power structure." These women—most of whom remain unnamed in the documentary evidence—greased the wheels of interracialism by organizing stimulating lectures with high-priced champagne, seafood hors d'oeuvres, and steak dinners, turning their husbands—historical enemies—into acquaintances and friends.⁹⁰ These gatherings helped white and black elites build a collective identity on the paternalistic notion that they—the elite of both races—should dictate Richmond's future by bridging the gap between them that centuries of racism had created. This was the same paternalism that facilitated Project One. Little did they know that the fulfillment of this attitude would ultimately undermine their future revitalization project. "Only a Richmonder could fully appreciate the unique quality of the evening in a city where people tend to revolve in their own social circles," a white attendee once said.⁹¹ Emerging from these secret meetings in spring 1982 was a second revitalization project to bridge the physical and psychological gap between black and white Richmond; something that these gatherings did, and that Project One had failed to do.⁹² Fulfilling this promise would be the interracial, nonprofit revitalization group ran by thirty black and thirty white members (sixty in total) named Richmond Renaissance Incorporated.⁹³

Representing Richmond Renaissance were two men: one black and one white. Clarence L. Townes, Jr., was born to a black middle-class family, graduated from the all-black Armstrong High School and Virginia Union University, owned a successful insurance firm and charter bus company, served on the Richmond City Republican Committee, became the first black Virginia delegate at the Republican National Convention in the twentieth century, and joined several Republican committees in D.C. to help the Party of Lincoln retain and recruit black voters.⁹⁴ T. Justin Moore, Jr., descended from an white upper middle-class family; graduated from Princeton University and the University of Virginia Law School; practiced law in Richmond; and served as the chief executive officer of the Virginia Electric and Power Company (now Dominion Energy).⁹⁵ Both men—one representing the black political establishment and the other representing the white business elite—convinced enough residents that Richmond Renaissance could capitalize on the "economic progress of Project One" while not perpetuating the same distrust and tension between white and black leadership.⁹⁶ Their formation received almost no immediate backlash from the grassroots. Interracial support for Townes and Moore was so strong that corporations around the city flooded the Richmond Renaissance bank account with almost a half of million dollars in donations to bring their first project into fruition.⁹⁷ Like Project One, this newer revitalization plan relied almost exclusively on local funding.

Richmond Renaissance pledged to raise more than \$2 million to begin constructing the Sixth Street Marketplace, a downtown mall that would sit next to the Project One hotel site. The Marketplace would be one of the already 22,000 malls decorating American urban spaces, such as Upper Darby in Philadelphia, Highland Park in Dallas, J. C. Nichols Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Park Forest in Illinois, and the most famous Levittown on Long Island, New York.⁹⁸ Its centerpiece would be a "glass covered pedestrian bridge across Broad Street" called the Bridge of Unity. This bridge would not only "link a black populated area of the city to the [white] downtown business, commercial, and shopping center," it was to be the architectural handshake between the races, symbolizing a city's desire to capitalize off of their racial tolerance: the ultimate expression of racial capitalism.⁹⁹ More so than Project One, city leaders felt that the Marketplace would become the social engineering project to turn their racial tolerance into a climate where economic prosperity facilitated reconciliation. As Townes once told a potential investor,

Richmond public officials, business and civic leaders perceive this project as a Bridge of Unity that will bring widely differing sectors of the community together . . . [and] affect how blacks and whites live and interact with one another.¹⁰⁰

Still, selling downtown revitalization to Richmonders relied on success stories. Fortunately, they all seemed to come from James Rouse, a socially conscious urban planner who has generated considerable scholarly attention.

The youngest of a well-to-do white Baltimore family, Rouse started his own mortgage firm in 1937 and worked with more than fifty-three city governments to construct downtown shopping malls; the most notable were in Philadelphia (Gallery at Market East), Detroit (Renaissance Center), Boston (Faneuil Hall), Atlanta (Peachtree Station), Baltimore (Harborplace), and Norfolk, Virginia (Waterside).¹⁰¹ Each project required Rouse to overcome issues with suburban flight, federal and state funding shortages, and racial division.¹⁰² That success compelled Rouse to accept an offer from T. Justin Moore and Clarence Townes to develop and manage the Marketplace in spring 1982.¹⁰³ Rouse quickly learned that in spite of the interracial goodwill surrounding the Marketplace, Richmond remained a racially segregated, majority black city of around 220,000 residents, surrounded by two nearly all-white suburban counties with a combined total of around 250,000 people. Rouse, Townes, and Moore conducted surveys to identify the fixable issues that perpetuated segregation. They found that whites vocally disliked the physical decay and high crime rates in black-dominated areas.¹⁰⁴ The most hated was Jackson Ward, a neighborhood located one block north of the Marketplace site. This eight-block wide downtown community was founded in the late-eighteenth century by free mulattoes and gained national prominence as home to America's oldest black-owned banks, insurance companies, fraternal organizations, and self-help enterprises. By 1982, however, centuries of red-lining and poor public services turned Richmond's black mecca into a dilapidated, crime-filled neighborhood.¹⁰⁵

The Jackson Ward dilemma unveiled Richmond Renaissance's attempt to coax the nastier sides of racial capitalism as an inclusive function of economic progress. Rouse, Townes, and Moore successfully pitched a Jackson Ward redevelopment plan to Richmond Renaissance.¹⁰⁶ While the initial intent was to work with Jackson Ward residents to improve their property values and beautify the area, the actual plans reinforced the racist redevelopment agendas of the past. Like the urban renewal movements of the 1950s and 1960s, Richmond Renaissance desired to ensure the Marketplace's vitality by "improving" the image of Jackson Ward. The best way to do that was to simply remove black residents from the area.¹⁰⁷ They articulated their efforts with the language of "inclusion," as Richmond Renaissance members approached some Jackson Ward business owners about selling their properties and entering the marketplace as vendors. The idea was that the Marketplace would absorb the viable black businesses that anchored Jackson Ward, shed the rest, as well as break the black property ownership monopoly that existed, opening the area to more revitalization and white ownership. Some were willing to sell their buildings and relocate; however, the offers were well-below market value.¹⁰⁸ "It is clear that even as middle-class blacks, we do not have the necessary financial clout to build a three million dollar development individually," a black business owner told his neighbors. Thus, they organized a united front against the ethnic cleansing of their beloved Ward.¹⁰⁹ Negotiations eventually fell apart and the city's elite looked for and successfully found "alternative sites to do business."¹¹⁰

Less than a month after construction began, Jackson Ward residents noticed that a large brick wall separated them from the Marketplace. This was no protective barrier from construction: it was a design separation between Jackson Ward and the growing Marketplace. The wall was later torn down after discussions between Jackson Ward residents and Richmond Renaissance. Yet the construction of it, and efforts to have it removed, symbolized the divide between political and

social progress. Even when the white power structure included well-meaning black leaders, revitalization and redevelopment policies remained heavily profit-driven and systemically racist against black residents, a point hammered home in N. D. B. Connolly's assessment of interracial coalitions and racial capitalism in South Florida.¹¹¹ Black Richmond residents learned this lesson quite well as, in the words of one Jackson Ward resident after the wall was removed: "I don't think we're going to be totally satisfied. But I think it is something that we're going to have to accept rather than fight further."¹¹²

On September 18, 1985, more than 50,000 people (around 20,000 residents) witnessed T. Justin Moore, Clarence Townes, and other city leaders give impassioned speeches about how the Marketplace and Unity Bridge would connect the races across the Broad Street dividing line. This unveiling preceded more than \$1 billion in other investments to build the Richmond Braves Stadium and renovate the Main Street Train Station.¹¹³ At the time, Project One's Marriott hotel, which was built on "the historic wrong side" of Broad Street, even operated at 85 percent capacity. Prospects were high for Richmond, but those closest to the project remained grounded. The new corporations who relocated to Richmond in the late 1970s helped the metropolitan area (a combination of Richmond, Henrico, and Chesterfield Counties) grow by the late 1980s (from just under 500,000 people to a little under a million). However, the suburbs absorbed the majority of middle-class residents and retail dollars. As the buildings in downtown went up, the metropolitan areas' economic and social life sprawled further and further outward.¹¹⁴ Hence, Clarence Townes answered *Minorities and Women in Business Magazine* honestly when he was asked "will it [the Marketplace] work." He said, "I think it will," but "the jury is still out, and ultimately only time will tell if the Sixth Street Marketplace will be more than just a symbol."¹¹⁵

"It Has Become a Symbol of Failure and It Must Come Down"

By the late 1980s, the "jury" had rendered its verdict: the Sixth Street Marketplace was a failure and the Bridge of Unity was its gilded relic. While blacks patronized the downtown mall, whites mostly refused to because "they think they'll get mugged or raped," a black Marketplace vendor sadly told reporters.¹¹⁶ This fear was largely unjustified as "walking beat patrols, the canine corps, horse troops, plainclothesmen, and cruise cars in large numbers" were around the Marketplace "before any other section of the city," Townes once touted.¹¹⁷ Still, the Marketplace was erected in a city where "[white] people were still leaving," a longtime resident remembered.¹¹⁸ Richmond Renaissance ignored this reality because they were, as one city planner suggests, "[too] captured by the idea of building a bridge between the black and white communities." He later assessed that, "Despite the efforts to bridge the black and white communities, the effects of racial segregation were still evident . . . [and] the magnitude of change generated by the marketplace was simply not enough to make a difference."¹¹⁹

In the next decade, Richmond—a city whose population sank to around 200,000 people (88,000 white and 112,000 black)—transitioned toward a "knowledge-based technology economy" anchored by Motorola, Siemens, and Capital One. This economic shift, along with the irony of spending millions in tax money on maintaining a mall designed to generate tax revenue, closed the door on the Marketplace and its architectural handshake.¹²⁰ Just days after the Marketplace's seventeenth anniversary, the Richmond City Council announced its demolition, citing that the Bridge of Unity "has become a symbol of failure and it must come down."¹²¹ While the council promoted the obvious slum-clearance project as the beginning of a series of downtown renovations, one business owner bluntly told the local press that the Marketplace and the Bridge of Unity was being demolished because, "Who shops here? It's not white people. It's black people."¹²² This demolition reflected more than decades of economic failure: it was city government's acknowledgment that interracial coalitions, and their use of racial capitalism, was not nearly enough to overcome the social and economic burdens of racial division, a lesson that cities around the nation also learned.¹²³

“Here We Go Again”

Today, Richmond is a city where local elites, both white and black, are embracing the newer yields of America’s urban demographic destiny. While the metropolitan area still hovers around 1,000,000 people in total, and the majority black Richmond still holds the least amount of residents (around 230,000), the race and class composition has drastically shifted in favor of Richmond.¹²⁴ Suburban sprawl during the 1980s and 1990s created cheaper, and more plentiful housing in the suburbs. At the same time, Richmond’s urban revitalization efforts birthed immature pockets of gentrification, which is now developing past its pubescent stages.¹²⁵ Like cities around the country, Richmond’s population growth is trending whiter and more affluent, while the once growing suburbs are becoming less white and affluent.¹²⁶

This demographic shift has not benefited the majority of the city’s 47 percent black population. As whites move in, they cluster in pockets and increase property values in once low-income areas, such as the downtown Jackson Ward neighborhood, and the East End area of Church Hill. The increased white population, while growing the service and real estate economy, has not lifted the struggling city services beyond their meager functionary capacities. While black residents have long complained about this trend, it was not until liberal white residents in the academic communities at Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Richmond publicly addressed it that local leaders enacted another revitalization plan. Although more structurally redistributive, the newer plan wreaks of the patterns of past failures, proving that current city leaders are not students of history or wiser than their predecessors.¹²⁷

In December 2018, black and white leadership announced the Navy Hill Project. They formed this downtown redevelopment agenda in response to local desires for rebranding the city away from its racist legacy, and the grassroots outcry to uplift the black underclass along with the recent influx of affluent, gentrifying whites.¹²⁸ The majority black Mayor Levar M. Stoney administration agreed in-principle with a white-owned, nonprofit development firm to revitalize the formerly black Navy Hill neighborhood.¹²⁹ Navy Hill was a majority black middle-class area at the dawn of the twentieth century. By the mid-century, white leadership demolished it to construct Interstate-95. The memory of forced removal was exacerbated by gentrification as the Altria Center for Research Technology moved into the area in 2011 and removed the historic marker. Seven years later, the mayor and the white business community became a part of this troubling continuum.¹³⁰

The Navy Hill Project was to be a \$1.5 billion multi-use facility equipped with 790,000 square footage of office space, 275,000 square feet for retail stores and restaurants, 17,500 seat arena, 3,000 apartments (680 apartments reserved as low income), 527-room high-rise Hyatt Hotel, \$10 million in updates to the historic Blues Armory, and a transfer plaza for the newly expanded public bus system. The mayor’s office touted that the majority black city would generate more than 12,000 jobs (9,000 permanent) from this venture. Minority vendors would also have exclusive access to \$330 million in public and private construction contracts. In sum, the Navy Hill Project would generate \$500 million in annual revenue and add more than \$1 billion to the capital improvement budget over the next thirty years.¹³¹ Built within the Navy Hill Project was a redistributive plan to create permanent under-skilled employment for the city’s largely black underclass, and fund the majority black and embarrassingly impoverished school system that has gone financially unsupported by city leadership for decades.¹³² In spite of the propagated benefits, the mayor’s office remained silent about who would pay for this venture, its likelihood of success, and would taxpayers suffer if the project went belly up. As 2018 succumbed to 2019, these key questions remained unanswered, transitioning the inquisitive voices into dissenting opposition.

“Here we go again . . . the ghosts of Richmond’s past failures haunt us,” a renowned journalist wrote.¹³³ He and many like him remembered when black politicians and white businessmen

promised residents that urban decay was a monetary issue that could be fixed with interracial cooperation on costly private–public projects. Richmond residents sued the mayor’s office to gather more details on the project in spring 2019. They learned that the wealthiest capitalists in Virginia crafted the Navy Hill Project and sold it to the majority black city council. Like Project One and the Sixth Street Marketplace, the council promised to allocate current (an undisclosed portion of the around \$800 million in capital improvement surplus) and future tax revenue (an estimated \$476 million) to sustain the “financing district” until it turned a profit. If the project took the full thirty years to become solvent, the city would owe at least \$600 million to its bondholders.¹³⁴ Even worse, the projected revenue for the city would be less than the amount spent on maintaining the project over the next twenty years.

This revelation compelled residents to channel the spirit of RITA and petition the local courts (although unsuccessfully) for a referendum vote to end the project.¹³⁵ The public-relations disaster drove the city council to create a community-led commission to educate residents on the benefits of urban revitalization.¹³⁶ They followed this effort with a slew of crisp, millennial-infused ads for the Navy Hill Project in the local press. Still, many residents felt that these efforts left “more questions than answers.”¹³⁷ Only time will tell if the Navy Hill Project, and others like it, is different from Project One and the Sixth Street Marketplace. Judging from the legacy of failed revitalization projects, this author assumes that Navy Hill fits well within the continuum of racist redevelopment policies. Richmond is like other cities that have received significant tax revenue from past decades of gentrification. Instead of investing in its majority black (97%) and impoverished public school system, leaders in Richmond and elsewhere continue to court white corporations who have done next to nothing to improve the cemented patterns of racial segregation and disparate levels of poverty.¹³⁸

It seems problematic that current urban leadership continues to try and correct the seemingly reliant structures of white wealth and black poverty with solutions that have been proven ineffective, such as tax-subsidies for concrete buildings that reinforce the wedded bond between public services and personal property taxes, as well as tax structures that do not convert corporate profits into societal benefits. American cities have suffered too long from corporate-centered tax policies that ensure economic elites beautified downtown islands surrounded by a sea of crumbling minority-occupied areas. Special projects designed to funnel some of the financial benefits of economic growth to black urban communities have, and most likely will, turn tax gains into long-term debt that many white businesses and residents can simply flee from. In sum, they are poorly designed band-aids that will infect the wounds they are designed to cover. While Richmond is not a major city, it is reflective of the American problem that often-implemented, tax-funded redevelopment plans rarely benefit racial minorities, even if a select few are involved in the decision-making process. Some residents in Richmond are optimistic that “this [Navy Hill Project] is no Sixth Street Marketplace,” and that the promises of Navy Hill will materialize into the economic stimulus it is designed to be. Let’s hope for Richmond’s sake that this is correct because, “If Richmond doesn’t acknowledge its history . . . in a meaningful way, it’s bound to keep repeating it.”¹³⁹

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129. Ibid; Michael Rao, "Navy Hill Would Be Transformative for All," Editorial to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, January 7, 2019, A7; and Jack Berry, "Navy Hill Proposal Many Possibilities to City," Editorial to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, April 8, 2019, A8.
130. Ordinance of the City Council of Richmond, Virginia, No. 2018-297, December 17, 2018 (Richmond City Hall Legistar Database); and "Who Is Behind the Coliseum Proposal," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, June 27, 2019, A1 and A4.
131. The known entities supporting this venture are Lighthouse Labs, Startup Virginia, Biotech Park, Dominion Energy, Altria Group Inc., the Virginia Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services, United Network for Organ Sharing, and companies as far west as Los Angeles are also invested in the project.
132. Eliminated Positions and Displaced Employees Who Required Notice, Minutes of the Richmond School Board, January 3, 1989-June 26, 1990, 26-7; and Interview with Sherman Curl, longtime administrator in Richmond Public Schools, December 20, 2019. For more information regarding the drastic cuts to public school spending since the busing failures of the early 1970s, see the bound Minutes of the Richmond School Board, 1980-2000 (Richmond Public School Archives, Richmond City Hall, 8th Floor, Richmond, Virginia).
133. Michale Dickenson, "Fix Schools, Clean Up City, then Talk About Area," Editorial to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 12, 2019, A6; and Michael Paul Williams, "Navy Hill?: The River Is Downtown's Best Plan," Editorial to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 17, 2019, A9.
134. "Who Is Behind the Coliseum Proposal," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, June 27, 2019, A1 and A4; and "Coliseum Proposal in Hand, Council Eager to Start Review," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 6, 2019, A1.
135. Ordinance of the City Council of Richmond, Virginia, No. 2018-297, April 23, 2019; Ordinance of the City Council of Richmond, Virginia, No. 2019-212, September 14, 2019; Resolution of the City Council of Richmond, Virginia, No. 2019-R047, September 9, 2019; Resolution of the City Council of Richmond, Virginia, No. 2019-R047, September 9, 2019 (RVA Legistar); "Richmond City Council Names Leaders of Panel to Review Coliseum Plan," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, July 24, 2019, A4; and "Goldman Appeals Registrar's Decision on Referendum Bill," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 31, 2019, A1 and A5.
136. "Richmond City Council to Hold Second Special Meeting on Area Referendum," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 14, 2019, A2.
137. Ad for the Navy Hill Project, found in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 5, 2019, A3; and Pamela Stallsmith and Robin Beres, "Downtown Redevelopment: Time for Review," Editorial to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 2, 2019, A8.
138. "How Can We Best Meet RVA's Needs?," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, April 7, 2019, E-1 and E-3; Interview with Dr. Rutledge Dennis, former Virginia Commonwealth University professor and long-time Richmond resident, July 26, 2019; Interview with Sherman Curl, longtime administrator in Richmond Public Schools, December 20, 2019; 39 Interview with Reverend Dr. Benjamin Campbell, March 10, 2019; Interview with Sylvester Turner, March 13, 2019, longtime minister and black community activist; Interview with Dr. Edward Peebles, June 24, 2019; and Interview with Robert Corcoran, March 11, 2019, longtime community organizer.
139. Geoffrey Usher, "Navy Hill Development Would Help City Flourish," Editorial to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 14, 2019, A8; Michael Paul Williams, "Black Portland Is Learning from It's Tragic Past," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, April 7, 2019, E-1; and "Navy Hill Progress Check," *Richmond Magazine*, November 8, 2019, 1.

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